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The situation in Afghanistan

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The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 67/16 and Security Council resolution 2041 (2012), in which the Council requested me to report on developments in Afghanistan every three months.

2. The present report provides an update on the activities of the United Nations in Afghanistan, including significant humanitarian, development and human rights efforts, since my previous report of 6 December 2012 (A/67/619-S/2012/907). It also provides a summary of key political and security developments and regional and international events relating to Afghanistan. The annex contains an assessment of progress towards benchmarks and indicators since my report of 5 March 2012 (A/66/728-S/2012/133), in line with Security Council resolution 1868 (2009).

II. Relevant developments

A. Political developments

3. The reporting period saw intense focus among Afghan authorities, political parties and civil society on the security and political transitions that will culminate in 2014 with the end of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) mission and the presidential elections. Connected to those milestones is activity aimed at defining and shaping a potential reconciliation process, over which the Government of Afghanistan is increasingly asserting ownership.

4. On 24 December, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs released a statement in which it said that peace consultative meetings must take place in agreement with the Government of Afghanistan and inside Afghanistan. On 26 December, the President,

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Hâmid Karzai, reiterated that any peace process must be conducted under the leadership of the Government of Afghanistan and the High Peace Council. In a joint statement upon the conclusion of the President's official visit to the United States of America, from 8 to 11 January 2013, both countries reaffirmed their commitment to an Afghan-led political process and support for an office in Doha for authorized representatives of the Taliban seeking dialogue with the Council. On 3 and 4 February, at a trilateral summit meeting held at Chequers, the country residence of the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Governments of Afghanistan, Pakistan and the United Kingdom similarly expressed support for the opening of an office in Doha. The three countries committed themselves to taking all measures necessary to achieve a peace settlement over the coming six months.

5. The High Peace Council continued efforts to build conditions conducive to reconciliation, including preparations for an ulema peace conference, marked by differences in approaches by the ulema councils of Afghanistan and Pakistan. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) continued to support the Council, in addition to undertaking political outreach, to help to build the conditions necessary for more formal talks. On 8 and 9 December, the Mission convened two round-table discussions with representatives of civil society and women's groups, religious figures and political leaders, including members of the Council. Parameters for a UNAMA-facilitated intra-Afghan dialogue were explored. UNAMA, with support from the Department of Political Affairs of the Secretariat, also undertook three mediation workshops, engaging community leaders in Herat, Mazar-e-Sharif and Kabul on conflict resolution. The Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Programme continued efforts to reintegrate lower-level former fighters, supported by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and UNAMA. According to the Programme's joint secretariat, 6,193 insurgents had joined the Programme by the end of December.

6. On 17 December, the Security Council adopted resolution 2082 (2012), in which it made adjustments to the Taliban sanctions measures previously outlined in resolution 1988 (2011). Notably, the Council strongly urged Member States to consult the Government of Afghanistan before submitting listing and delisting requests to the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1988 (2011). It also indicated a readiness to consider expeditiously travel ban exemption requests confirmed by the Government.

7. The issue of the 2014/15 electoral cycle continued to dominate the political landscape. On 23 January, the President issued a decree in which he directed that the national electronic identity card project (known as "e-taskera") should begin card distribution by the first day of the Afghan New Year (21 March). The Ministry of the Interior was charged with data collection and card issuance, while the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology was accorded responsibility for supporting the project. The project aims to distribute 14 million identification cards by March 2014. Representatives of the Ministry of Finance have indicated that around $120 million will be sought through bilateral funding arrangements. It is envisaged that the cards could be used as a form of voter identification for the elections to be held in 2014 and, in the longer term, serve as the permanent process for generating a voter registry with lists specific to each polling centre. On 23 January, after the Government continued to insist on the primacy of the e-taskera effort, the Independent Election Commission announced a more limited voter

registration plan that would rely on old voter cards and a top-up exercise. Scheduled to begin on 22 April, this plan would issue new voter cards to those who have come of age, returned to the country and/or lost or damaged their cards.

8. The UNDP electoral support project, ELECT II (Enhancing Legal and Electoral Capacity for Tomorrow, second phase), continued to provide technical support to the Independent Election Commission, while UNAMA facilitated information-sharing sessions to help to ensure the alignment of international stakeholders as the Afghan electoral framework evolves. At the Commission's request, a two-phase United Nations electoral needs assessment mission was undertaken from 27 November to 5 December and from 18 to 28 January. The head of the Electoral Assistance Division of the Department of Political Affairs led the team and met diverse Afghan and international stakeholders to provide me with recommendations on appropriate parameters for the potential provision of United Nations assistance to the upcoming Afghan-led elections.

9. Political parties and civil society continued to be heavily engaged in electoral developments. The Cooperation Council of Political Parties and Coalitions of Afghanistan demonstrated increasing cohesion following the launch of its democracy charter in September, with 22 diverse parties now members. At a press conference on 12 January, the Cooperation Council expressed support for a permanent Electoral Complaints Commission as the electoral dispute resolution mechanism. On 22 January, it criticized the scaled-down voter registration top-up plan, objecting to what it considered Government interference in the work of the electoral management body by failing to support original plans for a full voter registration exercise. On 27 January, the leaders of the National Front of Afghanistan coalition — one of two main opposition blocs — and several other political personalities issued what they termed a "joint statement of jihadi and political leaders of the country", in which they called for transparent, fair and free elections and an inclusive peace process. The signatories condemned plans to use old voter cards and demanded that electronic identity cards or new voter cards should be issued. They warned that a lack of reform in the electoral process, together with the international military drawdown, could lead to political crisis.

10. The National Assembly continued work on the legislative framework for elections. On 19 December, a joint committee was formed to resolve an impasse between the Meshrano Jirga, the upper house of the National Assembly, and the Wolesi Jirga, the lower house, over the draft law on the structure of the electoral management bodies. The Wolesi Jirga demanded an inclusive appointments mechanism for the Independent Election Commission and the Electoral Complaints Commission, with two international members included on the latter. Both of those demands have been rejected by the Meshrano Jirga. The other key piece of legislation, a draft electoral law, was submitted to the Wolesi Jirga on 29 December. The bill provoked controversy, given that it would replace the Electoral Complaints Commission, as set forth in the draft law on the structure, duties and jurisdiction of the Election Commission, with a judicial body as the final arbiter of electoral disputes. Other proposed amendments related to, among others, candidate eligibility, the electoral system and the authority to postpone or suspend elections.

11. The Wolesi Jirga demonstrated continued dissatisfaction over low budget execution rates and, on 11 December, rejected the expenditure report for the fiscal year 1390 (21 March 2011-20 March 2012). On 14 January, the ministers of energy

and water, education, urban development, the interior, economy, mines, higher education, counter-narcotics, commerce and industry, information and culture, and defence were summoned for interpellation over complaints that their institutions had spent less than half of the allocated funds. Only 7 of the 11 ministers appeared, with the Government pointing out that the remaining ministers had not been in office during the relevant period. The Wolesi Jirga refused to proceed and resolved to again summon all 11 ministers upon its return from its winter recess in March. On 20 January, the Wolesi Jirga approved the national budget for the fiscal year 1392 (21 December 2012-20 December 2013) after twice rejecting it.

12. The phased transfer of lead security responsibility from ISAF to Afghan security institutions continued. On 31 December, the President announced that the fourth tranche of the transition was set to begin in March, comprising 52 districts largely in the north and centre of the country. With that announcement, 23 provinces have begun, or completed, the transition. The fourth tranche includes areas home to 11 per cent of the population. Accordingly, when combined with the three previous phases, 87 per cent of the population is now under security for which Afghanistan bears lead responsibility. During the President's visit to the United States in January, it was agreed that the fifth and final tranche would be announced in the first quarter of 2013, but would be implemented in the middle of the year.

13. Afghan and international stakeholders continued to discuss the shape and scope of international political and military engagement in the post-2014 period. Legal privileges and immunities for United States troops remained a delicate issue and, on 14 January, the President stated that such privileges and immunities could be approved only by the Afghan people through a consultative gathering, or *jirga*. On 29 January, Afghanistan and the United States launched a third round of talks on a bilateral security agreement. On 6 February, during an official visit to Oslo, the President signed a strategic partnership agreement with Norway, which set forth cooperation until 2017, with a focus on education, good governance, rural development, women's rights and anti-corruption efforts.

B. Security developments

14. As at 25 December, the number of Afghan National Police personnel stood at 148,983 and Afghan National Army soldiers at 181,950, against surge targets of 152,000 and 195,000, respectively. In a joint statement issued on 12 January, the Presidents of Afghanistan and the United States reaffirmed that strengthening Afghan capabilities, including through the accelerated provision of appropriate equipment and enablers, was a key priority. The number of Afghan Public Protection Force personnel currently stands at 13,407.

15. On 5 February, the Minister of the Interior presented a draft 10-year vision for the Ministry and the Afghan National Police to the International Police Coordination Board. The strategy seeks to transform the police from a security force into a service focused on law enforcement and community policing. In line with the strategy, on 28 January, a democratic policing project was launched by UNAMA and the United Nations Office for Project Services with funding from the Government of the Netherlands. The three-year project should help to empower citizens to play an active role in police accountability and community engagement. It emphasizes outreach to women and children in the context of the Ministry's broader Police-e-

Mardumi (Democratic Policing) programme. Activities include strengthening the relationship between family response units and health-care providers; a university outreach project; provision of support to women police councils; and a literacy programme for female police officers. From 20 to 29 February, 11 high-ranking officials of the Ministry of the Interior undertook a 10-day study tour to Turkey to observe community policing initiatives, with the support of the UNDP-administered Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan. The Trust Fund continued to meet the salaries and remuneration of 138,216 police officers and 7,430 prison personnel. The UNDP Office of Audit and Investigations completed an inquiry into the Trust Fund, with administrative action to be taken on the basis of its findings. A summary of the report was distributed to donors.

16. As at 4 February, the Afghan Local Police programme had more than 20,105 personnel at 95 validated sites and was continuing to expand. While this local security initiative contributed to increased stability in some areas and progress in promoting accountability, concerns remain over insufficient implementation of policies regarding vetting, command and control and local-level oversight. In 2012, UNAMA documented 55 incidents, resulting in 62 civilian casualties (24 deaths and 38 injuries), attributed to the Afghan Local Police.

17. The United Nations continued to monitor security-related events relevant to the work, mobility and safety of civilian actors, in particular those affecting the delivery of United Nations activities and programmes. From 16 November to 15 February, 3,783 incidents were recorded, representing a 4 per cent decrease compared with the same period in 2011/12, when 3,940 incidents were recorded. The first eight months of 2012 saw a 30 per cent reduction in incidents compared with the same period in 2011. In the final quarter, there was a more moderate reduction of 10 per cent compared with 2011 levels. Significantly lower snowfalls than in 2011/12 contributed to a more consistent level of violence over the winter period rather than the usual sharp reduction in incidents. Since the beginning of 2013 to 15 February, there has been a 6 per cent increase compared with the corresponding period in 2012.

18. Provinces in the south, south-east and east continued to account for most security incidents, with the largest number recorded in Nangarhar Province, in the east. They included a complex attack against the Jalalabad airfield on 2 December. Armed clashes and improvised explosive devices continued to account for the bulk of the attacks; armed clashes between insurgents and Afghan or international forces accounted for a higher proportion of incidents than during the corresponding period in 2011.

19. Attacks in central Kabul — a suicide attack on 6 December that seriously wounded the Director General of the National Directorate of Security, in addition to complex attacks on the headquarters of the Directorate on 16 January and the Traffic Police on 21 January — garnered significant attention. Overall, however, from 16 November to 15 February, there were fewer suicide and spectacular attacks than in the corresponding period in 2011/12, largely owing to successful operations by Afghan and international security forces. On 3 February, six alleged suicide attackers were arrested by Afghan security forces in Kabul. Apart from insurgency-related violence, the population continued to face diverse sources of insecurity, including crime. Anger at the kidnapping and killing of the child of a well-known trader in the city of Herat, whose body was found on 31 January, led to commercial

strikes and demonstrations demanding capital punishment for the offenders amid rising kidnappings aimed at city traders.

20. United Nations premises suffered collateral damage in two incidents, including at the main facility of the United Nations Mine Action Service in Kabul during the attack on the nearby National Directorate of Security on 16 January. On 13 December, an improvised explosive device was discovered at a United Nations project site in Faryab Province. On 17 December, a United Nations vehicle suffered collateral damage when a suicide bomber targeted the compound of a foreign contractor in Kabul and, on 29 January, a United Nations convoy sustained small arms fire in Kabul Province en route to Jalalabad.

C. Regional cooperation

21. On 6 February, the fourth meeting of senior officials of the Istanbul Process on Regional Security and Cooperation for a Secure and Stable Afghanistan was held in Baku. Implementation plans were endorsed for the six confidence-building measures set out in the Process: counter-narcotics; counter-terrorism; trade, commerce and investment opportunities (merged from two measures in November 2012); regional infrastructure; education; and disaster management. Some fine-tuning remains, however. The need to maintain the political dimension of the Istanbul Process was emphasized by participants, with the next ministerial meeting scheduled for 26 April in Almaty.

22. On 11 and 12 December, the seventh trilateral summit meeting of the Presidents of Afghanistan, Pakistan and Turkey took place in Ankara. The participants reiterated their commitment to intensified cooperation among the three countries in support of Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace and reconciliation efforts and the need to address regional security challenges. On 6 and 7 February, the President of Afghanistan participated in the twelfth session of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation Summit, held in Cairo. He urged the members of the Organization to condemn acts of terrorism committed in the name of religion and the use of mosques and madrassas to propagate extremism. In its final communiqué, the Organization expressed support for an Afghan-owned and Afghan-led peace process.

23. The Government of Pakistan has provided specific support for Afghan peace and reconciliation efforts. On 18 January, following a tripartite meeting between Afghanistan, Pakistan and the United States, it was announced that all Afghan Taliban detainees in Pakistan would shortly be released as a confidence-building measure. On 14 February, a spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan said that Pakistan had released 26 Afghan Taliban. There has been no information on further releases. While supported by the Government of Afghanistan, prisoner releases have been the subject of some controversy among civil society actors, given a lack of follow-up information on the location and activities of former detainees. At the trilateral meeting held in February between Afghanistan, Pakistan and the United Kingdom, it was agreed that the High Peace Council would be consulted before future releases.

24. My Special Representative continued to emphasize support for regional cooperation. On 18 and 19 January, he participated in a regional political dialogue in Abu Dhabi that was hosted by the Governments of Afghanistan and the United Arab

Emirates with the support of Norway. The participants exchanged views on stability in Afghanistan from a regional perspective, focusing on transition, peace and reconciliation, elections and counter-terrorism efforts.

III. Human rights

25. On 9 December, UNAMA released a report entitled "Still a long way to go: implementation of the Law on Elimination of Violence against Women in Afghanistan", which was based on information gathered from 22 provinces from October 2011 to September 2012. It found progress and gaps in implementation. Although prosecutors and courts had turned to the legislation in an increasing number of cases, overall application remained low. In 16 provinces, police and prosecutors had received 479 reports of violence against women, of which 163 had resulted in an indictment and 72 had used the legislation within the indictment. There had been convictions in 52 cases (72 per cent), compared with 34 per cent a year earlier.

26. Protection of women's rights activists remained a matter of grave concern. On 9 December, the Acting Director of the Department of Women Affairs in Laghman Province was killed in a targeted attack, the second killing of the incumbent in five months. On 15 January, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and the World Health Organization (WHO) signed a memorandum of understanding to develop a referral system to support the treatment and care of victims of gender-based violence. The first programme of its kind in Afghanistan, planned activities include a study in six provinces on appropriate case management and treatment protocol, training for health personnel in all 34 provinces by the end of 2014 and one-stop assistance, to be piloted in hospitals in Kabul, Bamyan and Nangarhar Provinces.

27. On 20 January, UNAMA released a report entitled "Treatment of conflict-related detainees in Afghan custody: one year on". Based on interviews with 635 conflict-related detainees in 89 Afghan facilities covering 30 provinces, torture was found to persist in numerous detention facilities, efforts by the Government and international partners, in particular ISAF, notwithstanding. More than half of the conflict-related detainees interviewed had experienced ill-treatment and torture, notably in 34 facilities controlled by the police and the National Directorate of Security. On 22 January, the President established a fact-finding delegation to investigate concerns raised. On 11 February, the delegation announced that it had found the existence of torture and ill-treatment of detainees at the time of arrest and investigation by police and national security officials in almost 48 per cent of detainees interviewed, while two thirds had had no access to a defence lawyer. On 16 February, the President issued a decree for the implementation of the delegation's 11 recommendations pertaining to the prevention of torture and ill-treatment in detention centres.

28. On 19 February, UNAMA released its 2012 annual report on the protection of civilians in armed conflict. The report documented 2,754 civilian deaths and 4,805 civilian injuries in 2012, a 4 per cent decrease in civilian casualties as compared with 2011 — the first such reduction in six years. The figure included a 12 per cent decline in the number of civilians killed. Anti-Government elements bore responsibility for 2,179 civilian deaths and 3,952 injuries, a 9 per cent increase

compared with 2011. Pro-Government forces were responsible for 316 deaths and 271 injuries, a 46 per cent drop compared with 2011. Overall, 81 per cent of casualties were attributed to anti-Government elements, 8 per cent to pro-Government forces and 11 per cent were unattributed. The number of women and girls killed and injured increased by 20 per cent in 2012, with 864 casualties (301 deaths and 563 injuries). Other trends affecting civilian protection included increased targeting of civilian locations by anti-Government forces and an apparent proliferation of illegal armed groups, including pro-Government militias, in particular in the north and north-east of the country.

29. From 1 November to 31 January, UNAMA documented 472 civilian deaths and 1,063 civilian injuries, a decrease of 7 per cent in civilian casualties compared with the same quarter a year earlier. This total included a 17 per cent decrease in deaths and no change in injuries. Anti-Government elements were responsible for 81 per cent, and pro-Government forces for 7 per cent, of the civilians killed and wounded. The remaining 12 per cent of civilian casualties could not be attributed to any party; they primarily stemmed from crossfire incidents during ground engagements, cross-border shelling or from explosive remnants of war.

30. The United Nations-led country task force on monitoring and reporting on children and armed conflict received 166 reports of incidents involving grave child rights violations from 1 November to 31 January. A total of 79 deaths and 192 injuries to children were verified. Most were in the southern and eastern regions. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs expressed strong support for implementation of the action plan for the prevention of underage recruitment and its annexes on killing and maiming and sexual violence against children, including a commitment to convene the Interministerial Steering Committee and Technical Working Group on Children And Armed Conflict.

31. The second phase of the Afghan People's Dialogue on Peace, an initiative led by civil society and supported by UNAMA, was launched on 13 February. It aims to elicit the views of diverse citizens on perceptions of local drivers of conflict and identify possible local catalysts for durable peace. More than 200 focus group discussions with almost 4,000 Afghans from all 34 provinces are anticipated to be held over the coming 10 months.

IV. Implementation of the Kabul process and development coherence

32. The Government and its international partners continued work on implementing and monitoring commitments made at the Tokyo Conference on Afghanistan, held on 8 July 2012. In ensuring continued progress, discussion has centred on finalizing hard deliverables on core elements of the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework to be implemented before the meeting of senior officials in July.

33. On 12 February, the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board endorsed an additional four national priority programmes: efficient and effective governance; water and natural resources; national comprehensive agricultural production and market development; and national energy supply. This brings the total number of programmes endorsed to 20 of 22.

34. After intense engagement, the Board also endorsed the aid management policy, a key commitment of the international community in Tokyo. The policy provides a five-year framework to ensure the realization of the aid effectiveness agenda, in line with the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States agreed upon at the Fourth High-level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, held in Busan, Republic of Korea, from 29 November to 1 December 2011, and addresses alignment with Government priorities, on-budget financing and parallel salary scales for the civil service. The United Nations and the World Bank have committed themselves to aligning Government staff currently paid through their funds with an agreed Government scale for national technical assistance. This progressive alignment of salaries will affect between 6,000 and 7,000 staff and will take place over the coming two to three years as part of the Capacity-building for Results Programme, an initiative aimed at increasing Government capacity on a long-term sustainable basis.

35. To ensure greater transparency and accountability, representatives of civil society organizations have been introduced into the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework technical and steering committees. UNAMA continued to support civil society through a series of workshops in Kandahar and Jalalabad on engagement in policy discussion, and development planning and implementation. Amid concern over the potential impacts of the transition process on women, the United Nations country team is also considering how to best support systematic monitoring and reporting on gender commitments in the Tokyo Declaration and the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework.

36. In December, the United Nations country team endorsed a policy framework on how to address requests to the United Nations to assume activities previously conducted by provincial reconstruction teams. The policy emphasized Afghan leadership as a core transition principle, with requests considered only on a case-by-case basis. Criteria include that the request comes from the Government of Afghanistan; that activities reflect and reinforce agreed Afghan national priorities and programmes, including the aid management policy; and that they are consistent with and contribute to United Nations mandates and priorities and the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals. United Nations agencies must maintain the ability to deliver assistance according to established development and humanitarian principles.

37. On 13 February, the second annual meeting of heads of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes in Afghanistan and Afghan line ministries was co-chaired by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and my Special Representative. The meeting confirmed a reorientation of the relationship through the transition and the "Transformation Decade (2015-2024)". The Minister for Foreign Affairs, Zalmai Rassoul, noted that Afghanistan expected not less, but different, United Nations engagement. United Nations good offices should move from the traditional role to more technical support of Afghan-led political processes and capacity-building of Afghan institutions. A United Nations focus on development coherence, enhanced integration and strengthened delivery as one remained crucial.

38. From 22 January to 2 February, the International Monetary Fund conducted a review mission to Kabul. Elements of the review, in particular strengthening banking supervision and reforms, are central to the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework. Key actions identified for the Government to implement before the meeting of the Executive Board of the Fund in April include submission to the

legislature of laws on banking, anti-money laundering and value-added tax. The last-mentioned, at 2 to 3 per cent of gross domestic product, is expected to contribute greatly to the Government budget.

V. Governance and rule of law

39. On 8 January, the appointment of 60 district governors and 17 deputy provincial governors was announced. More than half of the 364 district governors and 32 of 34 deputy provincial governors have undergone selection through a merit-based recruitment process. The latest round of appointments included the country's first female district governor, Sayara Shakeeb Sadat, in Faizabad district, Jawzjan Province.

40. On 11 December, the Subnational Governance Coordination Forum discussed the implementation of the local governance national priority programme. Co-chaired by the Independent Directorate of Local Governance and UNAMA, with the ministries of finance, economy, urban planning, rural rehabilitation and development and donors in attendance, the Forum discussed issues such as probable gaps in assistance owing to the closure of provincial reconstruction teams. The Directorate unveiled a resource tool to display information on the priority programme's deliverables, resources and capacity requirements, currently being fine-tuned and populated with data. Of the two national priority programmes still to be finalized, a new draft programme on law and justice for all was distributed on 9 January, while the programme on transparency and accountability is proving more problematic, given that donors have concerns about progress in tackling corruption. Four actions were agreed upon for implementation before endorsement: asset verification of senior officials; laws passed on auditing; laws passed on access to public information; and simplification of construction permits.

41. On 7 February, the High Office of Oversight and Anti-Corruption, with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), released a survey on recent patterns and trends in relation to corruption in Afghanistan. Total bribes paid to public officials in 2012 were estimated at $3.9 billion, an increase of 40 per cent in real terms since the previous survey in 2009. Of 6,700 Afghans surveyed (of whom 42 per cent were women), half had paid a bribe to public officials.

42. On 5 February, the head of the Central Prison Directorate signed 99 operational prison directives aimed at guaranteeing the sound administration and management of prisons. On 20 and 21 February, the Women's Caucus of the Criminal Law Reform Working Group held a two-day workshop, supported by UN-Women and UNAMA, focusing on women's issues in Penal Code reform and increasing female representation within the Working Group. Under the auspices of the Prison Working Group, which UNAMA helps to support, the ministries of the interior and public health developed a memorandum of understanding transferring responsibility for health delivery in prisons to the latter so as to better ensure the required level of expertise in the delivery of health care to inmates.

VI. Development and humanitarian assistance

43. On 23 January, a quadripartite ministerial-level meeting of the Governments of Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan, together with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), was held in Abu Dhabi to oversee the implementation of the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees to Support Voluntary Repatriation, Sustainable Reintegration and Assistance to Host Countries. The Solutions Strategy was discussed in the context of my framework on ending displacement in the aftermath of conflict, which was piloted in Afghanistan. A joint Government-United Nations resource mobilization strategy was also agreed. The voluntary return of some 95,000 Afghan returnees in 2012 represented a 39 per cent increase compared with 2011. The Afghanistan pillar of the Solutions Strategy is focused on strengthening ties between humanitarian and development assistance. The Government of Afghanistan, supported by UNHCR, has prioritized the finalization of a national policy on internally displaced people, which aims to protect and assist the displaced, find durable solutions and prevent further displacement.

44. Nearly 3 million Afghan refugees continued to live in the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan, making the situation one of the most significant protracted refugee situations in the world. Obstacles to sustainable return include insecurity and lack of access to basic services, health care, education and livelihood. On 7 and 8 December, in Lahore, the Governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan agreed to a six-month extension of the proof of registration cards for registered refugees. On 15 and 16 January, during a tripartite meeting with the Government of Afghanistan and UNHCR in Tehran, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran presented innovative ways to encourage more refugees to return. Internal conflict-induced displacement stands at 500,000 people, 85 per cent of whom were displaced between 2010 and 2012. More than 94,000 people were newly displaced in 2012.

45. The second phase of a large-scale vaccination campaign carried out by humanitarian partners and supported by the Ministry of Health was completed in December 2012. It has to date prevented up to 40,000 cases of measles and averted some 2,000 deaths. Access for the campaign was generally good, with some 94 per cent of the targeted children reached. In 86 districts, however, coverage was below 80 per cent owing to insecurity.

46. The 2013 Common Humanitarian Action Plan, released on 14 December, identified the protection of civilians as the top priority, followed by reducing mortality and morbidity; assisting the displaced, returnees and host communities; and restoring livelihoods for the most vulnerable. A needs and vulnerability index assessed Kandahar, Helmand, Nangarhar, Ghazni and Kunar Provinces as experiencing the greatest needs. Expanding humanitarian access and delivery in the south and east has been, and will continue to be, a major focus in 2013. Overall humanitarian funding to Afghanistan fell by 50 per cent from 2011 to 2012, and in 2012 the consolidated appeal received only 48 per cent of assessed requirements. The Central Emergency Response Fund was reactivated at the beginning of 2013 to channel resources to actors capable of reaching conflict-affected people with acute needs. The funding target is between $10 million and $15 million for 2013, with an opening balance in January of $5.9 million.

47. Landmine clearance coordinated by the United Nations Mine Action Service saw 235 minefields cleared in the reporting period, enabling the productive usage of 20 km^2 of land. A further 21 communities are free of mines, positively affecting 46,000 Afghan civilians. UNMAS and other mine action stakeholders began work with the Government on mine action legislation in January.

48. The coming six months will be crucial for polio eradication with the Global Polio Eradication Initiative confident that virus circulation can be interrupted if the national emergency action plan is put into action. Closer engagement with communities, improved data collection and tracking of children missed owing to inaccessibility have resulted in a steady decline in unvaccinated children. Afghanistan reported 37 polio cases during 2012, down from 80 in 2011. The identification of two cases in December, coupled with the detection of wild poliovirus in the east and south-east and of vaccine-derived poliovirus in the south, prompted case response campaigns in December and January by the Ministry of Public Health with the support of the United Nations Children's Fund and WHO. The first interministerial task force, one of the key oversight mechanisms recommended in the national emergency action plan, met on 11 December. From 10 to 12 February, the first subnational immunization days of the year took place.

49. On 1 January, the Afghan National Environmental Protection Agency and the United Nations Environment Programme launched a climate change adaptation project concept — one of the largest initiatives to receive the support of the Least Developed Countries Fund. It focused on strengthening the resilience of communities in Panjsher, Balkh, Uruzgan and Herat Provinces through interlinkages between climate change adaptation, livelihoods and disaster risk reduction. Nationally, support was provided to the National Environmental Protection Agency for the preparation of a climate change strategy framework. The development of a national protected area system in Afghanistan to secure biodiversity and enhance ecosystem function and resilience in ecologically important areas is also under way.

VII. Counter-narcotics

50. The preliminary results of the 2013 Opium Risk Assessment for the south, west, centre and east, produced by the Ministry of Counter-Narcotics and UNODC, indicated an increase in poppy cultivation for the third consecutive year. Helmand, Kandahar, Farah, Uruzgan, Nangarhar, Ghor, Zabul and Kapisa Provinces — accounting for the bulk of cultivation — showed an increase, with a decrease expected in Herat and no major change anticipated in Daykundi, Nimroz, Badghis, Laghman, Kunar and Kabul Provinces. Ghazni, Khost, Logar, Paktika, Paktya, Panjsher, Parwan, Wardak and Nuristan Provinces remained free of poppies. The assessment for northern provinces will be released at a later date, given the different planting and harvest seasons.

51. To tackle the trafficking of precursor chemicals, a new regional intelligence working group was established to review trafficking cases, identify trends and recommend remedial action. From 21 to 23 January, the Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre in Almaty hosted a meeting attended by experts from the International Narcotics Control Board and UNODC. The meeting focused, in particular, on the seizure in 2012 of 11 tons of acetic anhydride in

Afghanistan, with case officers from the targeted countries working together to identify networks and routes.

52. On 25 January, a meeting on the Istanbul Process counter-narcotics confidence-building measure took place in Baku, followed by the endorsement of its implementation plan at the meeting of senior officials. On 30 January, the Counter-Narcotics Monitoring Mechanism of the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board met and endorsed the review and analysis of the national priority programmes. It was agreed that the Mechanism would work closely with programme cluster heads to refine the proposed counter-narcotics benchmarks and ensure mainstreaming.

VIII. Mission support

53. On 24 December, the 2013 budget of $196,231,400 — an 18.7 per cent reduction compared with the figures for 2012 — was approved by the Fifth Committee. An allotment of $191,815,700 was issued for 1 January to 31 December. The Organization will assess throughout the year the extent to which the remaining balance of funds will be released. By the end of December 2012, 631 posts (81 international and 550 national) had been abolished in line with budgetary cuts, many the result of the closure of the nine provincial offices. A second comprehensive Mission support review will be conducted to consider staffing levels and support structures throughout the country. Current vacancy rates stand at 5 per cent (14 per cent for international staff and 2 per cent for national staff).

54. On 11 December, the Kuwait Joint Support Office was launched, in line with the global field support strategy emphasizing enhanced cooperation between missions in geographical proximity. The Kuwait premises are used by UNAMA and the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq to deliver remote support on finance and human resource management. In addition, at the local level, UNAMA signed a number of cost-sharing agreements amounting to almost $9 million with agencies, funds and programmes to consolidate United Nations operations in Afghanistan. The most significant was a common services agreement worth $7 million with UNDP, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, the United Nations Office for Project Services, the United Nations Population Fund and WHO, which share facilities at the United Nations Operations Centre in Afghanistan in Kabul.

55. On 30 January, UNAMA inaugurated the new compound of its Bamyan regional office. All UNAMA international personnel now live on compounds conforming to United Nations minimum operating security standards in accommodation provided by the Mission. Seeking to enhance the security of the regional office in Kunduz, UNAMA is in preliminary talks with representatives of the Governments of Afghanistan, Germany and the Netherlands on using pre-existing, secure premises.

IX. Observations

56. The reporting period has been important in setting the stage for simultaneous security, political and economic transitions leading up to 2014. These efforts will help to underpin future stability, with elected Afghan leadership and robust

institutions able to deliver services to the population as critical elements. The relationship between the Government of Afghanistan and the international community is necessarily undergoing realignment, in which timely adherence to continuing mutual commitments is vital to ensuring confidence and coherence. The United Nations, too, has begun to reflect on its role in supporting the civilian aspects of the transition and assisting stability and development efforts in the post-2014 period.

57. Afghanistan will be able to achieve the stability, growth and prosperity that its people aspire to, and deserve, only if there is peace. Expectations surrounding reconciliation must, however, be realistic. After three decades of conflict, setbacks and misunderstandings will occur. In ensuring success, the overall process needs to be led and owned by Afghans and greater coherence and coordination are required. The past few months have seen a significant shift in focus by the Government to a more formal track, centred on the High Peace Council and authorized Taliban interlocutors. UNAMA continues to promote confidence and trust-building measures to further Government efforts, including through the provision of support to the Council and to regional cooperation, engagement on the sanctions regime and facilitation of inclusive intra-Afghan dialogue on visions of the future, including throughout the country.

58. The support of Pakistan for peace efforts is welcome, just as, more broadly, increased regional cooperation is vital to long-term sustainability and stability. The relationship of Afghanistan with its neighbours will become increasingly important as other international actors scale down their efforts. Momentum has continued with regard to the Istanbul Process with the endorsement of implementation plans for six confidence-building measures. The United Nations is engaged in each of these and participates in the corresponding technical groups.

59. Afghan political leaders will need to take a number of vital decisions in the near future, which will set the tone of and framework for the forthcoming elections. The timely development, through a transparent and participatory process, of a credible electoral framework is a key Government commitment under the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework. This should centre on the passage of election-related legislation. I note with concern the current potential for legislative deadlock, given the pressing need for political certainty and timely operational planning and preparations. Broad buy-in on what could be termed the "rules of the game" before polling is an important element in the legitimacy of the process and I encourage all Afghan stakeholders to engage constructively. The real — and perceived — independence, capability and neutrality of electoral management and dispute resolution bodies will be a political litmus test in helping to ensure the acceptability of the ultimate results. Most immediately, the appointment of a chair of the Independent Election Commission upon expiry of the incumbent's term — and the consultative process taken to reach a decision in that regard — will be crucial. The constitutional and international obligations of Afghanistan to ensure the participation of women as voters and candidates are also important.

60. The e-taskera effort is an important national process that must be supported by the international community and may contribute to electoral preparations. With the use of old voter registration cards and the top-up exercise expected to add additional cards to the mix, and given that the project may not be completed by the 2014 elections, it is unlikely that there will be significant improvements to voter

identification for the elections. To ensure adequate quality and acceptability of the elections, the focus must now increasingly encompass other key technical preparations, including improved electoral administration and enhanced fraud deterrence and prevention, without losing sight, however, of the need for inclusiveness and broad participation. Politically, the decision-making process on voter registration was damaging to perceptions of the independence of the Independent Election Commission. Recognition of and respect for the separation of powers and mandated authority of the various institutions is vital.

61. The Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework is the central framework for coordination and coherence between the Government and the international community. At the heart of these commitments is not only the conduct of inclusive and transparent elections, but also the realization of the human rights of all Afghans, in particular those of women and children, good governance and efforts to combat corruption, including increased financial transparency and accountability by all. The United Nations remains committed to strengthening institutional capacity in Afghanistan to meet these objectives and obligations. I welcome the joint endorsement of the aid management policy and four further national priority programmes, which provide for the more rational allocation of donor resources and programming, including of the United Nations, in line with Government priorities. The work of the Counter-Narcotics Monitoring Mechanism across the national priority programmes is important in ensuring that this scourge is increasingly tackled in a cross-cutting manner. The gains made by women over the past decade in Afghanistan need to be protected and built upon to promote sustained political, economic and social development. I therefore support efforts to ensure the systematic monitoring of gender impacts in the implementation of the Framework.

62. I am pleased by the announcement that a meeting of senior officials will be held in Kabul on 3 July to review the implementation of the Tokyo commitments. Progress requires deepened engagement by the Government and the international community as they move from process orientation to substantive issues and the development of hard deliverables to indicate progress in meeting those commitments. I look forward to their delivery by July as the first specific steps towards the realization of the ambitious goals of the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework. Ensuring that the International Monetary Fund reform programme remains on track is one aspect that requires efforts by the entire Government. The two remaining national priority programmes, on justice and on transparency and accountability, need to be concluded so as to demonstrate commitment to tackling the pervasive corruption that places the country's political, institutional and social fabric at risk. Resolute action leading to a strengthened justice sector is fundamental to the overall governance agenda in the Framework.

63. The decrease in civilian casualties, for the first time in six years, is welcome news. The human cost of the conflict, however, remains unacceptable. Steep increases by anti-Government elements in the deliberate targeting of civilians perceived to be supporting the Government, indiscriminate attacks in public spaces and the use of children as suicide bombers are all grave violations of international law. The Government reacted swiftly and constructively to the UNAMA report on torture and ill-treatment of detainees. The decree implementing the recommendations of the President's fact-finding delegation must now be acted upon to ensure an end to such practices. There has also been some progress in

implementing the Law on Elimination of Violence against Women, although deep challenges remain.

64. Afghanistan is in a protracted humanitarian crisis. Conflict, natural hazards, chronic poverty and underdevelopment continue to pose major threats. The number of persons displaced internally by conflict is growing, many returning refugees continue to require humanitarian assistance and natural disasters affect hundreds of thousands of Afghans every year. Humanitarian access presents major challenges. The economic impact of the transition could place further strain on an already highly vulnerable population against a backdrop of rapidly shrinking humanitarian funding. It remains a key priority to ensure increasing access to assistance and services and continued donor support to meet current and future humanitarian needs.

65. Budget cuts in the past year have significantly affected the shape of the Mission and its ability to deliver equally on all mandated tasks and activities. New, more flexible, working methods continue to be developed to maintain some degree of outreach, even where there is no longer a permanent UNAMA field presence. This includes joint missions by UNAMA with other United Nations agencies and the mobilization of outreach funds for activities relating to peace and reconciliation organized at the local level. Other potential measures include co-locating UNAMA staff with other agencies or local authorities, expanding road missions, where security permits, and using United Nations contractors. Nevertheless, it must be recognized that the UNAMA subnational network and political outreach is its unique comparative advantage. The closure of nine provincial offices presents challenges in maintaining regular contact with local authorities and civil society and affects the delivery of the Mission's priority mandated areas. Specifically, this includes the Mission's ability to support interaction between the central and local levels, as requested, to swiftly verify human rights incidents, to assist in the resolution of local conflicts, to build capacity of local government actors and to play an early warning humanitarian role.

66. I recommend that the mandate of UNAMA, which expires on 23 March 2013, be renewed for an additional 12 months. The Mission continues to play an important role in international support for Afghanistan and its operational activities are guided by and based on the imperatives of the transition process and its core mandated roles. Key priorities remain good offices and political outreach in support of Afghan-led political processes, including regionally; human rights; and development coherence with strong advocacy in relation to accountability for mutual commitments. As a nascent dialogue emerges on the future United Nations presence and working arrangements required after 2014, these priorities will also probably be core elements in assisting stability and sustainability through the transformation decade (2015-2024). The country's chronic poverty and susceptibility to natural disasters, exacerbated by an unstable and volatile security situation, mean that the humanitarian work of the United Nations will also remain critical for the foreseeable future. While these are the priority areas in which the United Nations can envisage continued engagement, carrying out work in those areas will require maintaining adequate resources and a meaningful presence around the country.

67. The Mission will necessarily change the way in which it works during a transition process that reinforces Afghan leadership, emphasizes increasing Afghan institutional capacity and sees a reduction in the presence of other international players. This adjustment will include enhanced linkages between the integrated

Mission and agencies, funds and programmes. I should like to stress that the United Nations is not seeking to routinely assume civilian tasks currently undertaken by the international military forces, including provincial reconstruction teams, and certainly would not consider doing so without an explicit Government request and unless fully in line with agreed Afghan national priorities and United Nations mandates and principles. The goal of the United Nations in Afghanistan must be to strengthen the political processes, institutions and capacity to deliver the services that the people require and deserve. Throughout a period of great change, the United Nations must maintain its stated and long-term commitment to the Afghan people, institutions and democratically elected authorities.

68. I should like to express my gratitude to all national and international staff members of the United Nations in Afghanistan and to my Special Representative, Jan Kubiš, for their continued dedication, often under challenging conditions, to fulfilling our commitments in support of the people of Afghanistan.

Annex

Progress against benchmarks

I. Security

Benchmark: sustainable Afghan security institutions and processes capable of ensuring peace and stability and protecting the people of Afghanistan

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
Increase in the number of national police and national army personnel mentored, trained and operational according to an agreed structure	• The army and the police have reached figures of 182,000 (12,355 below the end-state objective for December 2012) and 149,000, respectively. • The participants at the North Atlantic Treaty Organization summit held in Chicago, United States, on 20 and 21 May 2012 reaffirmed their support for the Afghan national security forces. Previously, a model for the future size of the forces was endorsed through the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board process. The preliminary model, defined by the international community and the Government of Afghanistan, envisages a force of 228,500 with an estimated annual budget of $4.1 billion, to be reviewed regularly against the developing security environment. The date for entry into force has not yet been finalized.
Development of and progress in a plan for a phased and conditions-based transition to Afghan security lead	• The President approved the third and fourth tranches of transition areas on 13 May and 31 December 2012. Transition implementation plans were launched. Upon completion of the fourth tranche, 87 per cent of the population will be under Afghan security lead.

II. Peace, reintegration and reconciliation

Benchmark: national dialogue and regional engagement to pursue constructive and inclusive process to foster a political environment conducive to peace

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
Development and implementation of inclusive national and regional processes to enhance peace, reintegration and reconciliation efforts	• At the end of December 2012, 6,193 anti-Government elements were enrolled in the Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Programme. This figure includes registration of 549 commanders or leaders and collection of 5,195 weapons. • The President met the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Pakistan on 19 July 2012 in Kabul to discuss the peace process and steps to facilitate intra-Afghan dialogue.

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
	• From 12 to 15 November 2012, a delegation of the High Peace Council visited Islamabad. Notable outcomes included the release of a dozen Taliban prisoners detained by Pakistan as requested by the Council and agreement that Pakistan, Afghanistan and the United States would facilitate the safe passage of potential negotiators.
	• On 11 January 2013, the President, during his visit to the United States, reaffirmed his support for a Taliban office in Doha, from where the Taliban would engage in direct talks with the representatives of the High Peace Council.
	• The Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Programme continued reintegration initiatives, including: (a) approval of 136 small grant projects in 69 districts in 22 provinces; (b) two demining projects covering Badghis, Baghlan, Samangan and Takhar Provinces; (c) 47 projects in 17 provinces, through the National Area-Based Development Programme, the National Rural Access Programme and the Rural Water Supply, Sanitation and Irrigation Programme; (d) vocational training for more than 1,300 ex-combatants and 1,700 community members by the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled; (e) the Ministry of Public Works established public works corps, employing 595 ex-combatants and 592 community members for routine road maintenance in six provinces.
	• The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Development Programme and the International Labour Organization signed a letter of intent in February 2013 to improve access to basic services in return communities and promote livelihood opportunities to help to bridge the humanitarian-development gap.
Increased ability by Afghan authorities to gather and provide substantiated, updated and accurate information to the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1988 (2011)	• In 2012, the Government of Afghanistan provided substantiated, updated and accurate information to the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1988 (2011).
	• In the period from 1 March 2012 to 28 February 2013, eight individuals were removed from the list of sanctioned Taliban members following well-substantiated delisting requests from the Government.
Increased public support for the peace process through engagement at the community level and with civil society	• Two provincial peace committees were established, bringing the total to 32. The number of provincial joint secretariat teams implementing the Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Programme increased to 32.

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
	• The High Peace Council and the Ulema Council continued outreach to influential religious actors, with 3,014 religious leaders identified as focal points for peace-related activities. • From 19 to 21 June 2012, more than 150 prominent scholars, civil society activists and religious leaders met in Kabul for a second international conference for Islamic cooperation for a peaceful future of Afghanistan. The participants issued a statement in which they condemned suicide bombing and other violence against civilians. • The women's committee of the High Peace Council held workshops in April 2012 with 350 women representing all provinces and, in December 2012, on women's role in peace and security and, with the Afghan Women's Network, on Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). Female members attended a conference on security in South Asia, held in Oman from 29 November to 2 December 2012, with Mohammad Masoom Stanekzai, an adviser to the President on home security and Secretary-General of the High Peace Council. • During Peace Week, in September 2012, the High Peace Council organized 195 outreach events nationwide and disseminated messages in the media to raise awareness of and mobilize support for peace efforts. Some 20,000 people participated.

III. Governance and institution-building

Benchmark: extension of Government authority throughout the country through the establishment of democratic, legitimate, accountable institutions, down to the local level, with the capacity to implement policies and to be increasingly capable of sustaining themselves

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
Increased ability by Afghan authorities and independent electoral institutions to manage and conduct genuine and periodic elections, with due regard to women's participation and constitutionally guaranteed quotas	• The Independent Election Commission finalized in May 2012 its five-year strategic plan (2012-2016), a road map for implementing its constitutional mandate, strengthening stakeholders' trust in the electoral process, safeguarding the women's quota and ensuring increased women's participation, and enhancing its capacity and sustainability. • The Commission reviewed the existing Electoral Law and sent its proposed draft to the Ministry of Justice

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
	on 11 June 2012. The Commission held consultations with Afghan stakeholders at the national and subnational levels.
	• In 2012, the Commission developed its voter registration planning for the 2014/15 elections. After extensive consultations, it approved a top-up registration exercise limited to new voters and building on previous registrations.
Establishment of a monitoring and evaluation committee and development of anti-corruption benchmarks	• In November and December 2012, the seventh visit of the Independent Joint Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee resulted in additional recommendations and benchmarks to address corruption. Recommendations total 57 (of 74) and benchmarks 58 (of 75).
	• In November 2012, the Committee completed a public inquiry into the Kabul Bank affair and submitted its report to the President. It also made it available publicly.
Empowerment of anti-corruption institutions to oversee a whole-of-Government approach to anti-corruption	• The Government continued work on the adoption of the Access to Information Law and the National Audit Law; asset registration, verification and publication; and streamlining of building permit procedures.
Annual publication of asset declarations of public officials	• The Government's High Office of Oversight and Anti-Corruption has led the registration, verification and declaration of assets of high-ranking public officials. At least 10 per cent of the registered list is expected to be verified by June 2013.
Increased capacity of civil servants at the central, provincial and district levels to discharge functions and deliver services	• The Independent Directorate of Local Governance made assessments of priority capacity needs in almost all provinces. Training manuals and guidelines are being developed with the Civil Service Commission.
	• The Capacity-building Directorate of the Independent Directorate of Local Governance developed action plans and budget proposals for trainings.
Increased transparency and effectiveness of civil service appointments	• Merit-based recruitment of district governors and deputy provincial governors continued, with 60 new district governors and 17 deputy provincial governors appointed in January 2013, including the country's first female district governor, in Faizabad district, Jawzjan Province. Overall, 189 district governors and 32 deputy provincial governors have been recruited through this process.

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
	• To increase awareness, the Independent Directorate of Local Governance conducted orientation programmes for provincial and district governors, highlighting the subnational governance policy.
Strengthened civil service reform supported by a comprehensive approach to capacity-building and donor-funded technical assistance	• The Capacity-building for Results Programme is a five-year programme, funded in the amount of $350 million, to increase the Government's capacity to deliver essential services through key ministries. The main tools are: creation of common function groups; institutionalization of civil service management; establishment of professional groups; provision of targeted technical assistance; and engagement of key ministries with donor programmes. It will also facilitate salary harmonization in the public service. The Government has set up a national commission of technical advisers.
	• The national priority programme on efficient and effective governance was endorsed at the meeting of the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board held on 12 February 2013.
Implementation of the subnational governance policy and development of subnational regulatory, financing and budgetary frameworks	• A prioritized implementation framework for the subnational governance policy was approved by the Independent Directorate of Local Governance to improve linkages between national-level and provincial-level policy and programme implementation.
	• Several laws are awaiting submission to the National Assembly: the Local Government Law was submitted to the Council of Ministers for review in January; the Municipalities Law, revised after extensive consultation with municipalities, is currently with the Executive Committee of the Legislation Department of the Ministry of Justice; and the Provincial Council Law is currently under review by the Interministerial Legislative Committee of the Ministry of Justice.
	• In 2012, 33 of 34 provincial development plans were completed, with improved focus on alignment with the national development strategy.
Development and publication of criteria for administrative boundaries	• In June, the Independent Directorate of Local Governance and the Afghan Geodesy and Cartography Head Office issued a joint statement in which they notified national and international institutions to accept the 2009 internal boundary data set as the official version to be used in Afghanistan.

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
Establishment of adequate infrastructure for functioning Government institutions, especially at the subnational level	• The Independent Directorate of Local Governance completed a needs assessment and plan for the construction of provincial administrative buildings, which was approved by the Ministry of Economy. The budget has been sent to the Ministry of Finance.
Establishment of credible and accessible judicial and penal systems that respect and uphold the human rights of all citizens	• In March 2012, the Council of Ministers approved the draft Criminal Procedure Code and submitted it to the National Assembly. In October 2012, the National Assembly also began reviewing the Law on the Office of the Attorney General. • On 5 February 2013, the head of the Central Prison Directorate signed 99 operational prison directives aimed at guaranteeing the sound administration and management of prisons. • The Criminal Law Reform Working Group, chaired by the Ministry of Justice, began its review of the Penal Code in May 2012. • In January 2013, the Government released for consultation the third draft of the national priority programme on law and justice for all, revised to take donor concerns into account. • The Ministry of Justice increased the number of legal aid offices to 29 in 2012 (from 1 in 2009 and 16 in 2011), for a total of 84 legal aid lawyers, with an additional 25 lawyers provided through the Justice Sector Development Programme of the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund. • In 2012, the provision of legal aid services by non-governmental organizations decreased from a peak of 250 defence lawyers to an estimated 236 lawyers by the end of the year. • The number of lawyers registered with the Afghanistan Independent Bar Association increased from 1,150 in December 2011 to some 1,500 in January 2013. • The pay and grading reform package for the Office of the Attorney General, implemented in March 2012, increased the salaries of all prosecutors. • The Government, with support from the United Nations Children's Fund, drafted guidelines on alternatives to the formal justice process for children in conflict with the law, such as vocational training or

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
	community service, so as to reduce the number of children in the system. The guidelines are under review by the main judicial institutions. • The Central Prison Directorate is examining 178 operational directives to improve administration and management, including on the classification of prisoners, visitation, standards of search and seizure, use of force and procedures for intake and release.

IV. Human rights

Benchmark: improved respect for human rights of Afghans, in line with the Afghan Constitution and international law, with particular emphasis on the protection of civilians, the situation of women and girls, freedom of expression and accountability based on the rule of law

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
Reduction in the number of incidents of unlawful use of force and intimidation of civilians, through compliance by relevant actors with international law	• In 2012, conflict-related violence killed 2,754 civilians and injured 4,805, a 4 per cent decrease in total civilian casualties compared with 2011. Anti-Government elements were responsible for 2,179 civilian deaths and 3,952 injuries, an increase of 9 per cent compared with 2011. Pro-Government forces were responsible for 316 deaths and 271 injuries, a decrease of 46 per cent compared with 2011. • In May 2012, the Government established a civilian casualties tracking team in the Presidential Information Coordination Centre and appointed a presidential adviser on the protection of civilians in November 2012. • To reduce civilian casualties, in June 2012, the International Security Assistance Force amended its operational procedures to further restrict the use of air power against civilian dwellings. • The Taliban released 53 statements on its public website, of which 25 addressed issues relating to civilian casualties and human rights protection. • The United Nations continued extensive monitoring and advocacy efforts to raise awareness of and improve compliance with international human rights law and international humanitarian law with all parties to the conflict.

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
Improved awareness by Afghans of their rights and by the Government of its obligations	• On International Women's Day, the President reaffirmed the country's commitment to upholding constitutional guarantees of gender equality and pardoned a number of women imprisoned for running away from home. On 16 September, at a meeting of the Women's Commission of the Wolesi Jirga, the ministers of women's affairs and justice condemned the imprisonment of women who fled incidents of violence and noted that there was no legal basis for the practice.
	• The Mission published four reports: two on the protection of civilians; one on the implementation of the Law on Elimination of Violence against Women; and one on the treatment of conflict-related detainees in Government custody. In conjunction with the reports, the Mission also carried out advocacy activities with stakeholders and the media to raise awareness among the general public.
	• In January 2013, the President established a delegation to investigate allegations of torture and ill-treatment in response to the report on conflict-related detainees. On 11 February, the delegation reported the existence of torture and ill-treatment of detainees at the time of arrest and investigation by police and national security officials in almost 48 per cent of interviewees, while two thirds had had no access to a defence lawyer. On 16 February, the President issued a decree to implement the delegation's 11 recommendations.
	• In March 2012, the Government submitted its annual progress report on the implementation of the action plan for the prevention of underage recruitment, which highlighted awareness-raising initiatives to address underage recruitment into the Afghan national security forces, improved vetting procedures and strengthened monitoring of underage recruitment and age verification procedures.
Improved impact of, and support for, legal and policy measures to combat violence against women and girls	• In 2012, a high commission for the elimination of violence against women was established in Kabul, along with nine provincial commissions, supported by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) through the provision of training and equipment. UN-Women also supported the Ministry of Women's Affairs in developing a database on violence against women and producing a nationwide statistics report.

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
	• The Afghan National Police and prosecutors received at least 2,300 reported incidents of violence against women, of which more than 1,100 resulted in criminal investigations.
	• A memorandum of understanding was agreed between Government ministries, the United Nations and non-governmental organizations for the development of a national policy for a gender-based violence referral framework and implementation of a referral system bridging the health, protection and justice sectors.
	• UN-Women continued to administer the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women, which funds 6 of the 28 women's protection centres in Afghanistan. Total disbursements for shelters in 2012 amounted to $450,000, supporting approximately 800 survivors of violence.
Improved awareness of, and support for, legal and policy measures related to combating impunity and furthering transitional justice	• The High Peace Council established a civil society unit to promote civil society participation in peace processes, although the Mission and civil society groups have noted that many provincial peace committees still do not include fair representation of civil society, women and victims' groups.
	• The steering committee of the Afghan People's Dialogue on Peace undertook in excess of 30 advocacy initiatives to promote the findings of the first phase of the Dialogue. The pilot for the second phase began in February 2013.
	• In support of the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), the Government has strengthened dialogue through technical working groups and consultations, helped by the United Nations and international partners.
Government fulfilment of reporting requirements on international human rights covenants and conventions and implementation of the recommendations from the Human Rights Council universal periodic review of Afghanistan	• Civil society, with support from the United Nations, prepared its shadow report for the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women to accompany the Government submission in the review process. In September, the Afghan Women's Network submitted to the Committee a list of issues identified via consultations throughout Afghanistan.
	• To implement the recommendation of the concluding observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Government committed itself to drafting a comprehensive child act.

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
	• In June, the Government finalized, with support from the United Nations Children's Fund, a review of national laws, strategies and policies on children's rights to identify gaps and areas of compatibility with the Convention on the Rights of the Child.
	• In September, the Government ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, with technical support from the United Nations Mine Action Service.
Increased capacity and commitment of the Government of Afghanistan and the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, as the Afghan national human rights institution, to respect, protect, fulfil and promote human rights	• In March 2012, the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission published a report on the treatment of conflict-related detainees in Afghanistan.
	• The Commission's Child Rights Unit, with support from the United Nations Children's Fund, is strengthening its monitoring of and reporting on children's rights. Actions taken included reviews of monitoring questionnaires, of the knowledge management system and of the Commission's internal coordination policies, in addition to training of staff.
	• In 2012, the Human Rights Support Unit of the Ministry of Justice conducted 12 training sessions for 326 officers of the National Directorate of Security and 36 officers of the Afghan National Police, focusing on core human rights issues, including the Convention against Torture and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

V. Economic and social development

Benchmark: Government policies supported by the international community that promote sustainable economic growth and contribute to overall stability

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
National priority programmes are designed and implemented with international support and endorsement	• In June 2012, the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board endorsed five national priority programmes. Coupled with the four endorsed in February 2013, 20 of the 22 programmes have now been endorsed.
	• At the Tokyo Conference on Afghanistan, held in July 2012, the international community pledged to provide up to $16 billion in development assistance until 2015 and further support at, or near, the level of the previous decade until 2017.
	• As part of the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework commitments, the Government is working with the international community to finalize

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
	funding modalities and facilitate the flow of funds to the national priority programmes. • The Ministry of Refugees and Repatriations signed memorandums of understanding with 12 key ministries, including the ministries of rural rehabilitation and development, education, public health, agriculture, and water, to prioritize areas with high return of Afghan refugees when implementing national priority programmes. • In August, with funding from the Government of Japan and support from the United Nations Population Fund, the Central Statistics Organization began work, expected to be completed by April 2013, on a sociodemographic and economic survey in Ghor and Daykundi Provinces. • The Deputy Minister of Youth Affairs within the Ministry of Information and Culture, with technical support from the United Nations Population Fund, initiated the development of a national youth policy in conjunction with a report being developed by the Fund on the status of youth development in Afghanistan.
More equitable distribution of development assistance and Government expenditure throughout Afghanistan	• The Ministry of Finance initiated a provincial budgeting pilot focused on four ministries (education, public health, rural rehabilitation and development, and agriculture) and the Independent Directorate of Local Governance. Each of the 34 provinces should receive $500,000 for programmes in the relevant line ministries and an additional $1 million through the Independent Directorate. The pilot was included in the 2012 budget. To date, however, only $17 million has been secured for the Ministry of Education, where the pilot has begun. • On the basis of an assessment by the Ministry of Finance of public finance management, action plans are being prepared to build the capacity of line ministries to improve their budget implementation and absorptive capacity.
Increased revenue collection and sustainable growth based on Afghan resources	• Preliminary estimates by the Ministry of Finance put domestic revenue for 2013 at $2.4 billion, a 41 per cent increase compared with the figure of $1.7 billion in 2012. Revenue collection has improved, notably in taxes on income and on the sales of goods and services. Nevertheless, these estimates indicate that the Government will not meet its 2013 internal target by 7 per cent and the International Monetary Fund target by 11 per cent.

VI. Regional cooperation

Benchmark: sustained and effective regional coordination in support of prosperity, peace and stability

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
Improved coordination of regional bodies and increased regional investments	• On 14 March 2012, the counter-narcotics Regional Programme for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries, supported by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, held its first steering committee meeting in Vienna. It also supported the first tripartite ministerial meeting of the new subregional cooperation framework between Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, held on 1 June 2012 in Dushanbe. • The fifth Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan, held in Dushanbe on 26 and 27 March 2012, focused on prioritizing regional needs. Participants committed themselves to taking serious and measurable steps towards the implementation of 17 projects presented for funding at the Tokyo Conference on Afghanistan, held in July 2012. • Afghanistan was granted observer status at the Shanghai Cooperation Organization summit, held in Beijing on 6 and 7 June 2012. • In November, the United Nations Mine Action Service supported a visit by the Mine Action Centre of Afghanistan to its counterpart in Tajikistan to promote improved demining operations. • The first ministerial-level meeting of the Istanbul Process on Regional Security and Cooperation for a Secure and Stable Afghanistan was held on 14 June 2012 in Kabul. The attendees included high-level delegations from 14 Heart of Asia nations, 14 supporting countries and 11 regional and international organizations. The participants decided to implement seven priority confidence-building measures supported by regional technical groups. These were subsequently consolidated into six measures, with the chambers of commerce and commercial opportunities confidence-building measures merged into trade, commerce and investment opportunities. All six — counter-narcotics, counter-terrorism and trade, commerce and investment opportunities — were endorsed at a meeting of senior officials held in Baku on 6 February. Some work remains to be done, however.

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
	• The sixth meeting of a core group of senior officials from Afghanistan, Pakistan and the United States met in Islamabad on 27 April 2012. Two working groups were established to facilitate peace efforts.
	• From 9 to 13 November 2012, the President undertook an official visit to India. Four pacts were signed to increase cooperation on local government and community organizations, agriculture, youth affairs and the development of coal and mineral resources.
	• On 29 November 2012, Afghanistan participated in the second Pakistan-Afghanistan-China trilateral dialogue meeting, during which the importance of counter-narcotics campaigns was highlighted. The parties expressed their support for the leading role of the United Nations in the context of international cooperation on counter-narcotics.
	• On 11 and 12 December 2012, the seventh trilateral summit meeting of the Presidents of Afghanistan, Pakistan and Turkey took place in Ankara. The participants reiterated their determination to intensify cooperation on Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace and reconciliation efforts and to tackle security challenges affecting the region.
	• On 4 February 2013, a trilateral meeting between the Presidents of Afghanistan and Pakistan and the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom took place at Chequers, United Kingdom. Deliverables from the meeting included: arrangements to strengthen coordination of Taliban detainee releases from Pakistani custody; agreement to provide the High Peace Council with a formal role in the release of additional Taliban detainees; and steps to increase cooperation between the Afghan and Pakistani military and security services.

VII. Partnership between the Government of Afghanistan and the international community

Benchmark: coherent support by the international community for Afghan priorities within an Afghan-led coordination framework

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
Increased percentage of aid aligned with the Afghanistan National Development Strategy and Government priorities	• The aid management policy, deemed critical to the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework, was finalized in December 2012 and endorsed at the

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
	meeting of the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board held in February 2013. It provides for implementation in Afghanistan with a prioritized set of interventions.
	• The international community reaffirmed its commitment to channelling 50 per cent of development assistance through the national budget and aligning 80 per cent of assistance to the national priority programmes at the Tokyo Conference.
	• The Ministry of Finance continued to conduct regular development cooperation dialogue discussions with partners to assess progress towards alignment of support to the national priority programmes in line with the guidance provided in the aid management policy.
Improved accountability of procurement and contracting on behalf of the Government and the international community	• The aid management policy was endorsed at the meeting of the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board held in February 2013. This builds on Afghanistan's score on the Open Budget Index initiative, which increased from 21 in 2010 to 59 in 2012, surpassing the target score of 40 set down in the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework commitments.
Strengthening of the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board in support of the Kabul process and as a means of regular review of progress on Afghan priorities and mutual commitments	• During the second half of 2012, the Government and the international community agreed on a revised set of coordination structures to support the implementation of the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework through the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board. The revised structure includes a steering committee chaired by the Ministry of Finance to promote strategic dialogue at the ministerial and ambassadorial levels and a technical committee comprising deputy ministers and key donors.

VIII. Counter-narcotics

Benchmark: sustained trend in the reduction of poppy cultivation, narcotics production and drug addiction

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
Decrease in poppy cultivation, narcotics production and addiction rates	• Opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan covered 154,000 ha in 2012, 18 per cent higher than the 131,000 ha covered in 2011. A total of 95 per cent of cultivation was concentrated in the southern and

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
	western provinces: 72 per cent in Helmand, Kandahar, Uruzgan, Daykundi and Zabul Provinces and 23 per cent in Farah, Herat, and Nimroz Provinces, respectively. Cultivation rose significantly in Kunar Province (121 per cent), Kapisa Province (60 per cent) and Laghman Province (41 per cent).
	• Potential opium production fell by 36 per cent in 2012, from 5,800 to 3,700 tons, owing to plant diseases and bad weather.
	• The latest survey by the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs of the United States Department of State on drug use in Afghanistan indicated that the number of adult drug users could exceed 1.3 million, with some 300,000 children affected. Drug treatment increased to support an estimated 15,974 individuals in more than 90 drug treatment centres.
Increase in effective interdiction and counter-trafficking efforts	• In 2012, counter-narcotics police officers conducted 2,928 operations, a 62 per cent increase compared with 2011. Those operations resulted in seizures of 126 tons of opium, 54 tons of morphine, 8 tons of heroin, 132 tons of hashish and 179 tons of precursor chemicals. Counter-narcotics police assisted with the eradication of 20,530 ha of opium poppy fields and dismantled 72 heroin-manufacturing laboratories. Those activities led to the arrest of 2,760 suspects.
	• The Regional Intelligence Working Group on Precursors reported that 11 tons of acetic anhydride had been seized in July at the Islam Qala border crossing (Herat Province). Under the Afghanistan-Kyrgyzstan-Tajikistan initiative, Afghan counter-narcotics police carried out a joint simultaneous operation with the Tajikistan Drug Control Agency in November, seizing some 500 kg of narcotics and making a number of arrests.
Increase in licit agriculture and related private capital investment in areas previously used for poppy cultivation	• The National Alternative Livelihood Policy drafted by the Ministry of Counter-Narcotics was endorsed in February 2012. The policy enables the Government to strengthen and diversify legal rural livelihoods by tackling the root causes and drivers of opium cultivation dependency.